



PHOTO-NEWS BULLETIN

No. 1

Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize (Br. Hon.)

SIGNIFICANT STEPS TAKEN IN BATTLE AGAINST DISEASE

MOBILE HEALTH UNIT LAUNCHED

MINISTER ROGERS SIGNS AGREEMENT FOR THREE MEDICAL-DENTAL MOBILE UNITS

"It is our intention to take Medical Health Services to every nook and corner of Belize!"

These words by the Minister of Home Affairs and Health, the Hon. C. L. B. Rogers have come to life with the introduction of the first mobile medical health unit, bought and paid for by the Belizean Government, now in service. The land-rover type unit was handed over to the Acting Chief Medical Officer, Belizean Dr. James Pike on Thursday, January 24. It started operating on Monday 25th when it made its first visit to Ladyville and the village of Maskall, Mile 40 on the Northern Highway. To man it were officers of the Public Health Section of the Medical Department. On Wednesday, 27th the unit was in Sandhill.

HEALTHY PEOPLE-HEALTHY ECONOMY

With the Government's own mobile unit launched, Minister Rogers, during his weekly visit to Belize City on Thursday, January 21st signed an agreement on behalf of Government



*Minister Rogers signing Agreement with Amigos President Jim Wren
with Friends Dr. Pike, Dr. Walker.*

with AMIGOS INTERNATIONALS INC. which was represented by the corporation's President, Mr. Jim Wren.

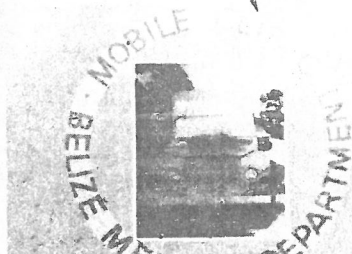
Speaking on the agreement, Mr. Rogers said that whereas there are hospitals and clinics in the main towns and larger villages in the country, there is great need to reach remote villages. The introduction of the Government unit is the beginning of a country-wide programme.

"Because of the shortage of trained

do not have the services of doctors and nurses," explained Mr. Rogers.

"We want to keep all our people healthy," he added, "so that they can fully participate in the great task before us. A healthy people means a healthy economy. It will save many man hours which are lost due to ill health and which is a detriment to our peaceful constructive Belizean revolution," said Mr. Rogers.

THE AGREEMENT



The AMIGOS will provide three staffed medical-dental units for operation in this country. They will provide all the necessary funds for the operation of these units.

Minister Rogers emphasized that the project is a partnership. The AMIGOS will provide the vehicles, staff, drugs and equipment. They will operate strictly under the supervision and direction of the C.M.O. All professional personnel will have to receive approval from the C.M.O., who is responsible to the Minister. The Ministry of Health will decide where the units will be deployed throughout the country.

The Ministry of Health has made sure in the agreement that the units will not compete with any existing national medical, dental, nursing or drug facilities. AMIGOS will make no charge to those patients who are treated. Neither will Government.

For its part, the Belizean Government, centered in the new capital city of Belmopan, has agreed to waive custom duties on the AMIGOS equipment, and to provide credentials for the professional personnel practising in the unit.

TWO YEARS OF PLANNING

The Government of Belize, through the untiring efforts of the Ministry of Health, has gone to a great deal

of hard work to prepare the agreement. For the past two years the new policy, spearheaded by Minister of Health Rogers, has been in the making to bring this most essential health service to our hard working people in the rural areas.

The entire operation is designed for both the Government of Belize and the AMIGOS corporation to

work in what has been described as "a spirit of cooperation and endeavour to solve any unforeseen problems which may arise after the AMIGOS commence operation."

WHAT IS THE AMIGOS?

Amigos Internacionales Inc., was organised five years ago through the efforts of Mr. Jim Wren, and the Reverend John LaNoue, former director of the Henderson County Junior College Baptist Student Union. The organisation is incorporated as a tax deductible corporation and has an advisory board of prominent professional men reaching from El Paso, Texas to Hope, Arkansas.

The function of the AMIGOS is to provide mobile units equipped for medical and dental aid in areas where there are no existing facilities. The entire programme is operated on a voluntary basis.

The provision of the first mobile health unit by our Government to launch the programme and the three units to come from the AMIGOS by January 1972 is not the end of the plan. Negotiations with other organisations, notably OXFAM in the United Kingdom are well advanced to obtain other units to expand and strengthen our medical facilities throughout the new Belize.



A Healthy People....



Means A Healthy Economy.